

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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TAGS: EAIR, EGEN, FI

SUBJECT: CIVAIR: FINNAIR'S SERVICES TO NEW YORK

REF: A)HELSINKI 537; B) STATE 056673

1. TEXT OF FINNISH MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS' REPLY TO U.S. NOTE DELIVERED ON MARCH 11 AS DESCRIBED REFTEL A IS GIVEN BELOW. COUNSELOR ULF-ERIK SLOTTE OF MINISTRY TOLD ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR WHILE HANDING OVER NOTE (NO. 44729 DATE MARCH 20, 1975) THAT HE HOPED THAT ITS CLARIFICATION OF FINNAIR'S PLANS RE DC-10 SERVICE TO NEW YORK WOULD MAKE UNNECESSARY INFORMAL TALKS IN WASHINGTON (OFFERED REFTEL B), BUT IF SUCH WERE TO BE HELD DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NATIONAL BOARD OF AVIATION K.J. TEMMES WOULD UNFORTUNATELY NOT BE AVAILABLE WEEK OF MARCH 24 - 28. SLOTTE SUGGESTED INSTEAD APRIL 3-5.

2. BEGIN TEXT. THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS PRESENTS ITS COMPLIMENTS TO THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND HAS THE HONOUR TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RECEIPT OF THE EMBASSY'S NOTE NO. 31 DATED MARCH 11, 1975 AND WISHES TO DRAW THE EMBASSY'S ATTENTION TO THE FOLLOWING FACTS PERTAINING TO THE OPERATIONS OF FINNAIR BETWEEN FINLAND AND THE UNITED STATES.

AS FROM APRIL 1ST, 1975 FINNAIR WILL BE INTRODUCING DC-10 AIRCRAFT ON SOME OF ITS NEW YORK FLIGHTS. THE

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TIMETABLE IS ENCLOSED.

THE MAIN PURPOSE OF FINNAIR, WHEN ORDERING DC-10 AIRCRAFT, WAS NOT TO INCREASE THE SEAT CAPACITY BUT TO ENDEAVOUR TO OFFER SAME QUALITY OF SERVICE AS THE OTHER AIRLINES WERE OFFERING AS WELL FOR PASSENGERS AS FOR CARGO. UNFORTUNATELY DC-10 PROVIDES MORE SEATS THAN FINNAIR WOULD AT THIS TIME NEED EVEN WHEN TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE FIFTH FREEDOM TRAFFIC. WHEN, FURTHERMORE, FINNAIR IS PLANNING TO FLY NOT MORE THAN ONCE A DAY SERVICE, WE CONSIDER THAT THE DETERMINING FACTOR WHEN CONSIDERING THE VOLUME OF FINNAIR'S SERVICES TO NEW YORK SHOULD BE THE FREQUENCY OF FLIGHTS PER WEEK, AND NOT THE THEORETICAL SEAT CAPACITY.

AS IS SEEN FROM THE TIMETABLE, THE NUMBER OF FINNAIR FLIGHTS TO NEW YORK IN SUMMER 1975 WILL NOT BE INCREASED OVER THAT OF THE SUMMER 1974. THE FACT THAT FOUR OF THE FLIGHTS WILL BE OPERATED BY THE DC-10 AIRCRAFT WILL CREATE AN INCREASE OF THE SEAT CAPACITY OF 53 PERCENT OVER THE ACTUAL CAPACITY IN THE SUMMER 1974. IF COMPARED WITH THE AUTHORIZED CAPACITY OF SUMMER 1974 (WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN ALL DC-8 FLIGHTS WITH AN ALL-PASSENGER VERSION) THE SUMMER 1975 REPRESENTS AN INCREASE OF ONLY 25 PERCENT. AS FAR AS THE NONSTOP FLIGHTS HELSINKI-NEW YORK-HELSINKI ARE CONCERNED, FINNAIR OPERATED IN THE PEAK MONTHS OF THE SUMMER PERIOD 1974 ONE ROUND-TRIP AND ONE ONE-WAY NONSTOP FLIGHT WEEKLY. IN THE CORRESPONDING PERIOD 1975 FINNAIR WILL OPERATE THREE ROUND-TRIP NONSTOP FLIGHTS REPRESENTING AN INCREASE TO A DOUBLE CORRESPONDING TO EQUAL REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF THE FLIGHTS WITH AN INTERMEDIATE LANDING.

IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF THE TRAFFIC CARRIED BY FINNAIR TO AND FROM NEW YORK IS 3RD/4TH FREEDOM TRAFFIC FROM/TO HELSINKI. IN THE YEAR APRIL 1, 1973 - MARCH 31, 1974 THE HELSINKI-NEW YORK AND VICE VERSA SHARE IN PASSENGER NUMBERS WAS 68.3 PERCENT AND IN REVENUE 72.6 PERCENT AND IN THE SUMMER PERIOD APRIL 1, 1974 - OCTOBER 31, 1974 THE CORRESPONDING PERCENTAGES WENT UP TO 71.6 AND 74.8. THIS SHOWS THAT THE AMOUNT OF FIFTH FREEDOM TRAFFIC REMAINS QUITE REASONABLE. THE NUMBER OF FINNAIR FLIGHTS VIA AMSTERDAM AND COPENHAGEN TO NEW YORK WILL BE FURTHER REDUCED IN THE SUMMER PERIOD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1975. DURING THE SUMMER 1974 FINNAIR OPERATED BETWEEN AMSTERDAM AND NEW YORK 6 FLIGHTS PER WEEK AND DURING THE SUMMER 1975 THE WEEKLY FREQUENCY WILL BE 4. DURING THE SUMMER 1974 FINNAIR OPERATED BETWEEN COPENHAGEN AND NEW YORK 3 FLIGHTS PER WEEK AND DURING THE SUMMER 1975 THE WEEKLY FREQUENCY WILL BE ONE. THIS MEANS THAT AMSTERDAM-NEW YORK FREQUENCIES WILL BE REDUCED BY ONE THIRD AND THOSE BETWEEN COPENHAGEN AND NEW YORK BY TWO

THIRDS.

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THESE REDUCED FREQUENCIES, THE VERY MODERATE AMOUNT OF TRAFFIC, PICKED UP BY FINNAIR ON ITS FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS, THERE DOES NOT SEEM TO BE ANY BASIS FOR CONCERN IN THIS MATTER.

THE MINISTRY HOPES THAT THE EXPLANATIONS GIVEN ABOVE WILL SETTLE THE DOUBTS PUT FORWARD IN THE EMBASSY'S NOTE, AND THAT, THEREFORE, THERE SHOULD NOT BE AN URGENT NEED FOR REVIEWING THE SITUATION AT THIS STAGE.

THE MISISTRY FURTHER WISHES TO POINT OUT THAT THE FINNISH AUTHORITIES APPROACHED THE EMBASSY ALREADY IN NOVEMBER 1974 IN ORDER TO FIND OUT WHETHER THE U.S. AUTHORITIES WOULD BE INTERESTED IN AN EARLY EXCHANGE OF VIEWS CONCERNING THE TRANSATLANTIC TRAFFIC. AS THE EMBASSY'S NOTE WAS HANDED OVER LESS THAN THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SUMMER SCHEDULE, WITH ALL THE PLANNING ALREADY DONE, IT IS FELT THAT THERE IS NOT TIME ENOUGH FOR MAJOR CHANGES IN THE SCHEDULE.

THE FINNISH AUTHORITIES ARE, HOWEVER, QUITE WILLING TO ENTER INTO TALKS CONCERNING THE ABOVE SUBJECT IF NEEDED, AND WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST APRIL 3-5, 1975, AS A SUITABLE DATE FOR A VISIT TO WASHINGTON, D.C. BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF AVIATION, MR. (J. TEMMES.

THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AVAILS ITSELF OF THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RENEW TO THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA THE ASSURANCE OF ITS HIGHEST CONSIDERATION.
END TEXT.

3. ENCLOSURE TO NOTE IS UNSUITABLE FOR TELEGRAPHIC TRANSMISSION AND IS BEING AIRMAILED DIRECT TO MR. JOHN MEADOWS, EB/TT/OA.

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